

May 2020

# *St Mary's News*

The magazine of the  
**Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin**  
A Registered Charity  
Henley-on-Thames  
Oxfordshire



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Part of an ancient Christian fresco from the Catacombs of Domitilla in Rome, depicting Jesus the Good Shepherd.

### ***From the Rector***

Dear friends,

Like many people during this time of lockdown, my family has found that keeping some sort of shape to the day is vital in order to preserve our sanity and get anything done. As a priest, my day continues to be shaped by the daily round of Morning and Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer, and as a family we have made a daily walk for exercise a part of our rhythm and routine. The daily walk has been a great source of pleasure and comfort. Depending on the available time, we either walk up into the woods on the Remenham side of the river, or simply walk up and down the river itself. We have bumped into some of you (whilst of course maintain social distancing)! Having spent most of my adult life in central London, it has been a great delight to see the incremental changes in nature in springtime, especially in the woods; to notice the scent of the bluebells, or the changes in light as the leaf cover gradually increases, and the arrival of ducklings along the riverbank has brought great joy to us all, and especially to the girls.

This season is a season of joy, the church's great season of Easter in which we celebrate Jesus' triumph over death, in which all creation rejoices in redemption and renewal and new life. Yet for many of us joy is hard to find. For many of us it is a time of fear and loneliness, and time when we are denied the things that matter most to us, the company of our loved ones and the worship and the sacraments of the church. The news is grim; 27,500 deaths and counting, each one of them a real person with a unique set of gifts and experiences and memories, with friends and families who miss them deeply.

We recently celebrated the feast of S. George the Martyr, patron saint of England (and quite a few other places), and I was particularly struck by the readings set for Morning Prayer, one from the Old Testament Book of Joshua, the other from the Letter of S. Paul to the Ephesians. Both strongly featured exhortations to courage. We might think of courage as an individual virtue; the bravery that comes from confidence in one's own ability and strength. But this is not the courage that the Bible speaks of. The courage that the Bible speaks of is rooted in something which is beyond the strength and abilities of the individual; the courage that the Bible speaks of is rooted in that which is beyond us. I suspect that many of us in our different ways draw courage from things which are bigger than us, even beyond us. Our communities, our nation, our National Health Service, our networks of families and friends, and of course the natural environment around us – all of these things point us to a life and strength and love which transcends our own individual strengths and weaknesses; all of these things point to forces and values which transcend our isolation and give us courage.

From a Christian point-of-view all of these sources of comfort and courage, these manifestations of beauty and goodness and love, these things point us to the God in whom all things live and move and have their being, the God who is above and beyond all things. So I encourage you all, in the words of the Letter to the Ephesians, to "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His power".

With my prayers,

Fr Jeremy

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*Monday is the Rector's day off:  
Friday is his study day.  
He would appreciate being spared calls on these days except  
in an emergency.*

## *Church at Home*

<http://www.stmaryshenley.org.uk/church-at-home-easter-4/>

Sermons will continue to be uploaded weekly to the parish website: <http://www.stmaryshenley.org.uk/who-we-are/rectors-blog/>.

We will be connecting with others in Henley and Remenham to find ways of supporting those who are most vulnerable in these difficult times.

You can also follow us on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/St-Marys-Church-Henley-on-Thames-139822910238683/> and <https://www.facebook.com/StNicholasRemenham/?eid=ARA8WIXzrOeNZZ61ccWzYjq1P0IKFM3i-IMuTVPUkJvpNjoU8eu5ijc0DSJ5N7Tiyq4NqY8TF9xycCui>

Please also keep an eye on our parish websites: <http://www.stmaryshenley.org.uk/>; <https://www.remenhamparish.org.uk/>.

## ***Calendar and Prayer Intentions for May 2020***

<b>Friday 1 May</b>	<b>Ss Philip and James, Apostles</b>	<b>Pharmacists</b>
Saturday 2 May	S Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, Teacher of the Faith (373)	Christians in Egypt
<b>Sunday 3 May</b>	<b>The Fourth Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>The Parish and People of God</b>
Monday 4 May	English Saints and Martyrs of the Reformation Era	Christian Unity
Tuesday 5 May	Feria	The fight against Covid-19
Wednesday 6 May	Feria	Chilterns Court Care Centre
Thursday 7 May	Feria	Badgemore School
Friday 8 May	Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer (c.1417)	The National Health Service
Saturday 9 May	Feria	The departed
<b>Sunday 10 May</b>	<b>The Fifth Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>The Parish and People of God</b>
Monday 11 May	Feria	Thamesfield Care Home
Tuesday 12 May	Feria	The Bishops of Oxford and Dorchester
Wednesday 13 May	Feria	Our churchwardens
<b>Thursday 14 May</b>	<b>S Matthias the Apostle</b>	<b>Perseverance</b>

Friday 15 May	Feria	Those in need
Saturday 16 May	Feria	Those who mourn
<b>Sunday 17 May</b>	<b>The Sixth Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>The Parish and People of God</b>
Monday 18 May	Rogation Day	Local farmers
Tuesday 19 May	Rogation Day	Local businesses
Wednesday 20 May	Rogation Day	Respect for God's creation
<b>Thursday 21 May</b>	<b>Ascension Day</b>	<b>The Parish and People of God</b>
Friday 22 May	Feria	Those who suffer
Saturday 23 May	Feria	The departed
<b>Sunday 24 May</b>	<b>The Seventh Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>The Parish and People of God</b>
Monday 25 May	The Venerable Bede, Monk at Jarrow, Scholar, Historian (735)	Christian scholarship
Tuesday 26 May	S Augustine of Canterbury, first Archbishop of Canterbury (605)	The Archbishop of Canterbury
Wednesday 27 May	Feria	Broken families
Thursday 28 May	Feria	Hope
Friday 29 May	Feria	Those in need
Saturday 30 May	Feria	The gifts of the Holy Spirit
<b>Sunday 31 May</b>	<b>Pentecost</b>	<b>The Parish and People of God</b>

The days between Ascension Day and Pentecost have in recent years been kept as special days of prayer for the renewal of the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is reflected in the prayer intention for Saturday 30 May, and of course we should pray for the pouring out of Holy Spirit on the church at all times, but you may wish particularly to pray for the renewal of the church in the power of the Holy Spirit from 22-31 May. The BCP collects for the Sunday after Ascension Day and Whitsunday are particularly suitable for this purpose.

### ***Parish Giving Scheme***

Our Parish Giving Scheme has now gone live! I signed up this lunchtime! It seems like a lifetime since when we made the decision to adopt it just before the beginning of lockdown!

It took a bit of planning to get the church's application form signed, given that two of the signatories were not going out, but about a fortnight ago we heard that we were registered!

It has never been so critical to get as many people as possible in the congregation signed up, particularly those who pay by envelope of whatever colour and thus are unable to contribute at the moment. For the last eight weeks our main source of income has been our forty or so people who pay by standing order. All our fee income has fallen away under the pressures of social distancing, and for the same reason no one wants to book the church or the Chantry house. Because of the church closure we do not have the benefit of wall boxes or the Good Box. Fortunately, a lot of our expenditure has fallen away and our employees are being paid under the furlough scheme, but we are topping up the missing 20%. The main problem going forward is paying the Parish Share. We like to grumble about this, and I am no exception, but we have to bear in mind that the Parish Share funds the stipends of our clergy. The Diocese has looked rigorously at all aspects of their budget and Diocesan staff have volunteered to take a pay cut as have some clergy.

Against this background the PCC will need to consider dipping into our reserves to pay the Parish Share. We have immediate funds available to pay two tenths of the Parish Share over May and June. We will see how much money we receive from Henley Municipal Charities in July, but given that they depend on commercial rents this, is very likely to be less than the usual amount. Whatever we receive always goes straight to the Parish Share. Although we could afford to pay the Parish Share out of reserves, and still leave money to pay for the new boiler, it would be good to reduce the amount we have to withdraw from reserves as much as possible.

Therefore, we hope to start sending out application forms soon, which people can complete and send to the Parish Giving Scheme office which is still open. We will be also sending out emails, where we have email addresses, explaining how to set this up by telephone. Alternatively, you can just ring 0333 002 1271 and someone from PGS (Parish Giving Scheme) will contact you to help you set a direct debit and gift aid. You may not get through straight away, but you can leave a message and they will get back to you – that's what I did. Our Parish Code is at the bottom of this article. The church needs your urgent support in this crisis!

Parish code : 270627170

Kathryn Turner

Honorary Treasurer

## ***Gardening***

Well May already and what a beautiful spring it has been so far. It's still a bit early to put out the non- hardy plants as I made that optimistic mistake last year and lost my runner beans and sweet peas to the beast from the east. We have another beast from the east this year but that's a lot more serious.

I don't know how I would survive without my garden so I have started making some videos of it to share with any of you who would like to see them:

<https://onedrive.live.com/?authkey=%21AEAnj27QN7CiAk0&cid=4BB3E8FC6A22EF1E&id=4BB3E8FC6A22EF1E%212566&parId=4BB3E8FC6A22EF1E%21141&o=OneUp>

Mary Wood has also done a video of her beautiful garden and made it available on You Tube and through the parish newsletters Fr Jeremy is sending out. Mine are there as well but if you want me to send an internet copy I am quite happy to do so. My email address is [dgc9427@btinternet.com](mailto:dgc9427@btinternet.com). I think it is very important to keep connected at this time.

It's the time to plant out lots of bits both in the greenhouse and out to the beds. The onions are in their tubs in the greenhouse and in the beds outside and the Italian Trombolino squashes I took my own seeds from last year are looking very healthy. My new plant for this year is melons and I bought two different types as well as saving some seeds from a Tesco melon we bought before lockdown. All three have germinated well so I will be giving lots away and filling the greenhouse with them. There's something very satisfying about saving you own seeds. The runner beans have been carefully treated after last year but have just refused to germinate so it is going to be another poor crop. I do have my French climbing beans which are looking good and two varieties of dwarf beans that I will dry and save for winter.

Last year we bought a dehydrator for the produce as chillies take up a lot of space and I tried making Italian style sun dried tomatoes which was a great success. This year I have stopped growing the big beefsteak tomatoes and am growing Italian plum tomatoes instead so we can have pots (hopefully) of sun driers. Sheila is busy planting out her flowers so it should be very colourful throughout the summer. The fruit trees have been beautiful this year which bodes well for a healthy crop in autumn.

For me one of the great delights of this time of year is the wild flowers which appear year after year with no care or attention. The bluebells are spectacular this year and I just let them keep growing and spreading. They are full of early bees and the smell is delightful. I think it just shows that the good lord is a better gardener than me.

We'll keep safe and keep in contact with each other.

With all our love.

Dave and Sheila.

## ***Christian Aid Week*** ***10-16 May***

**<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>**

Think of Christian Aid Week and you might picture red envelopes through doors, plant sales, Big Brekkies, banners in front of churches, special services and much more. Since 1957 the week has brought communities together in action and prayer and while the coronavirus pandemic means that Christian Aid Week 2020 will be different, churches across the diocese are being invited to stand in solidarity with the world's most vulnerable people in new and innovative ways.

With daily quizzes and live-streamed worship, supporters can be involved from their own homes and could also take part in the 300,000 steps in May challenge which will be run through Facebook or send an electronic donation envelope - an 'e-envelope' - to friends and family.

Some groups are arranging online plant sales, while others are doing sponsored runs, cycles or walks in their daily outdoor exercise or in their own homes and gardens.

Christian Aid Week manager Sophie Brightwell said: "Coronavirus is teaching us what it feels like to feel vulnerable, to fear, to be separated and experience scarcity.

"It is at times like these - testing and painful times - that we recognise we are all in this together. Coronavirus impacts everyone, but love unites us all. Christian Aid Week has always been a joyful celebration of what we can achieve together for the world's poorest people and in this time of global crisis Christian Aid's work is needed as much as ever before.

"The most vulnerable and marginalised people are at the greatest risk from coronavirus. In Sierra Leone there are no ICU beds and in Malawi there is one ICU bed for every one million people. In refugee camps, people are not able to keep socially distant from one other and 40% of the world's population do not have access to soap and water.

"Christian Aid was established after the Second World War when people across this country had lost so much but knew that refugees across Europe were in a desperate situation. As we mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day at the start of Christian Aid Week, my hope is that we can show that same compassion and resolve as we saw in a different time of crisis as together we show that love never fails."

Everyone is equal in the sight of God. For over 70 years, this has inspired us to stand together in solidarity with our global neighbours, of all faiths and none. Visit [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk) for further information

## **News from Christian Aid**

### **25 March 2020**

As the Syrian crisis entered its tenth year, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Islamic Relief and World Jewish Relief came together to organise an inter-faith prayer vigil outside the Houses of Parliament to raise awareness about the on-going conflict in the country, and to demonstrate solidarity with our local partner organisations working to provide assistance and protection to people caught up in the fighting and refugees seeking a place of sanctuary from the violence.

As our plans got underway, the Coronavirus epidemic spread around the globe and to the UK also; impacting on the lives of our staff, our volunteers, their families and communities up and down the country. Whilst our initial plan to convene the prayer vigil outside Parliament could not go forward, the participating agencies and faith leaders involved wanted to find an alternative way to demonstrate their solidarity with people in Syria, whilst also finding a safe way to come together – and so we took the prayer vigil online.

## **Emergencies to pray for**

The Amazon rainforest is burning.

Indigenous and traditional communities are on the frontline of the fires. Their lives are being wrecked and their common home destroyed by an economic model that reduces nature and people to merchandise, fails to accept the planet's limits and is driving climate breakdown.

The people of the Amazon have been fighting to steward the Amazon – the lungs of the world - for decades, often paying the price with their lives.

Will you stand with the people of the Amazon as they stand with God's creation?

Please pray for the people of the Amazon and call on our Prime Minister to ensure that any UK response or future dealings with Brazil and Bolivia put the Amazonian people in charge.

## **The Christian Aid e-envelope**

Christian Aid Week is a joyful celebration of our potential to change the world through our gifts, prayers and actions. Together, we raise funds to support our poorest sisters and brothers around the world. Coronavirus means Christian Aid Week is very different this year. But we hope supporters like you will do all you can to make it the same life-changing and joyous week we've run since 1957.

Donate by creating your e-envelope:

[https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/?\\_ga=2.138165619.29738648.1588533670-394344903.1588533670](https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/?_ga=2.138165619.29738648.1588533670-394344903.1588533670)

## ***News from NOMAD***

NOMAD are continuing their vital work of supporting people who are struggling in Henley, work which is even more important in these difficult times. They have seen a marked increase in need for assistance in the past weeks. Fortunately the people of Henley have responded positively and generously, and NOMAD have been overwhelmed by people's kindness. That said, the need for donations continues. There are several ways of doing this:

- If you shop in Tesco, simply place items for the food bank in the box Tesco have placed close to the shop entrance
- Make a donation online at [www.totalgiving.co.uk/charity/nomad](http://www.totalgiving.co.uk/charity/nomad)
- Take food donations directly to NOMAD at D2 on any weekday morning
- Write a cheque and put it in the post; cheques should be made payable to NOMAD

## ***Notices***

### **The Parish Office**

The Parish Office is currently closed because of Covid-19. Fr Jeremy is able to receive telephone calls to the Parish Office at home.

### **St Mary's Choir Fund**

*A beautiful print of the church commissioned originally for the Millennium (church restoration) appeal, renowned 'Ladybird' artist Martin Aitchison is available to buy in aid of the St Mary's choir fund.*

*At just £12 for a mounted print including details of the artist on the back, this print will fit into any standard 16 x 12 " frame. Details from parish office or Gill Aitchison in the choir.*

***Forthcoming Concert***

*Henley Choral Society, Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September  
at St Mary's*

'Nelson Mass', Haydn

Ave Verum Corpus, Mozart

Miserere Mei Deus, Gregorio Allegri

For Lo, I raise up, Stanford

O for the wings of a Dove,  
Felix Mendelssohn

**Rector**

Revd Jeremy Tayler  
rector.hwr@btinternet.com

**Churchwardens**

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07398152388  
Sue Hockley  
01491-575896

**Treasurer**

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**Organist**

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07739 712783

**Tower Captain**

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01491 579795

**Mothers' Union**

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01491 577340

**Planned Giving**

(envelope scheme)

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